



St Andrew's College

# Prefects' Investiture and Leadership Assembly – Rector's Address

**Christine Leighton**

**Friday 3 February 2023**



Kia ora koutou katoa

Welcome to this morning's Prefects' Investiture and Leadership Assembly, when we honour our student leaders for 2023. In this, our first official assembly for the year, we recognise the important place of leadership development in all young people, and we hope that you will all continue to seek opportunities to grow and develop your leadership capacity.

It gives me pleasure to welcome Mrs Felicity Odlin to this assembly as Chair of the Board of Governors. Welcome Mrs Odlin and I thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to present some awards and honour today's leaders. Welcome back to Harry Withers and Thomas Kamo, Head and Deputy Head Prefect, from

last year, who are here to support and hand over to our new leaders.

A special welcome to whānau who have joined us this morning. You have every reason to be proud of your son or daughter who is being recognised in a leadership role for 2023.

Before we begin with the leadership recognition, I would like to acknowledge a few sports awards from competitions held after the school year had finished in December. A number of students represented St Andrew's College at the New Zealand Secondary Schools Athletics.

Two students achieved exceptional results, with Jonah Cropp (currently Year 13) taking the gold medal for the 3km Open walk. Jonah achieved a personal best, beating his previous time by 35 seconds and narrowly missing out on a record by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a second. Jonah receives a National Championship badge. Congratulations Jonah.

The second medallist is Couper Killick who as a Year 13 student last year won Bronze in the Senior Boys' Shotput.

Also at the end of last year, the Mixed Senior touch team coached by Mr Adams and managed by Ms Register competed at the New Zealand Secondary Schools' Touch Championship in Rotorua, placing fourth in this highly competitive field. Team representative, Sienna Stowers-Smith (Year 10), will receive our congratulations on behalf of last year's team.

Finally, two of last year's Year 12 students were named in the New Zealand U18 Women's 7s team that played in the World 7s U18 tournament last December in Auckland. This morning we present Penelope Taulafo and Sienna Stowers-Smith with their New Zealand Representative badges.

And now to our celebration of leadership for our prefect group, followed by the various leadership roles for senior students.

Due to current gym restrictions on numbers and a large number of guests in assembly today, Middle School leaders are being recognised at a concurrent assembly for Years 9–11.

Being a good leader, just like being a good person, is a life-long process. At St Andrew's we are encouraged to manage ourselves, understand and develop our character strengths through diverse experiences, and appreciate the skills, dispositions and diversity within our community.

I urge you all to value the opportunities you have here and use these to grow the best attributes within yourselves.

Remember, the first person you need to lead is yourself, and this is about being the best that you can be. It means knowing your strengths and building upon these, confronting your fears or weaknesses and taking opportunities to learn and grow.

We also know that attending to the small things in our daily lives, showing kindness, watching out for others, being honest and knowing and delivering what is expected of us is an important place to start. In this way you will grow your character along with your capabilities.

In our country and across the world we witness many types of leadership from prime ministers and presidents, health experts and passionate advocates for change.

Our place as leaders at St Andrew's College is less conspicuous, but nevertheless it is important within our community and we can truly make a difference to those around us.

Every one of you can aspire to be the kind of leader, who practices selflessness and inspires trust, one who makes the right choices and can honestly say you have done your best.

Our student leaders of 2023 will at times be tested and challenged. You will at times have to draw upon inner strength or support of others. Perhaps you will have to choose a course of action which is not popular, or what your mates are doing.

What really matters is how people see your contribution to your leadership role at the end of the year, not the fact that you are receiving a badge today.

These comments are of course relevant to you all at the start of a new year, whether you are in a recognised leadership role or not. You can all make your mark by the smallest of actions, you can draw on the principles of manaakitanga and make our St Andrew's College community a safe, inclusive and happy place for all.

On Monday, New Zealand will celebrate Waitangi Day, 173 years after Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed. This foundation document for New Zealand has presented some challenges for successive governments of Aotearoa, but as a country we have made significant progress towards an agreed and positive interpretation. In the late 1980s the principles of Te Tiriti were defined as the three P's: Partnership, Protection, Participation.

- In **partnership**, Māori and Pakeha working together, we value the taonga each other bring to Aotearoa;
- By **protecting** Māori knowledge, language and values we bring a sense of unity to Aotearoa;
- By ensuring **participation** for all, we empower Māori, Pakeha and all New Zealanders with equal opportunities in our society.

There are continued leadership challenges to achieve this vision for all New Zealanders and here at St Andrew's College is a good place for us to embrace these.

Being a student leader in a school gives you an opportunity to develop some important life skills. The responsibility of leadership comes with certain requirements.

The seven essential qualities I want to emphasise today are a great place to start:

1. Curiosity – what works and what doesn't.
2. Emotional Intelligence – how do I impact others.
3. Self-discipline and organisation stepping up to responsibility: getting things done.
4. Open mindedness and flexibility – open to others' ideas, being inclusive.
5. Trustworthiness – meeting expectations.
6. Good communication skills – taking others with you, personal and public speaking style.
7. Positive thinking – positive thoughts, words and actions which develop mindful habits.

For our student leaders taking on roles and responsibilities in 2023, we recognise that our College values of Truth, Excellence, Faith, Creativity and Inclusivity must guide not only what we say but what we do in our every day actions and relationships. Alongside the St Andrew's values we also recognise Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga and Rangatiratanga in our commitment to "Together, Growing Better People for Life".

Nō reira tēnā koutou katoa.